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ABSTRACT

Wilderness programs should seek to capture the qualities of a wilderness experience that separate it from other outdoor activities. In so doing, wilderness programs should move beyond the goals of the Wilderness Act of 1964 to provide "outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation." Drawing upon the writings of such wilderness philosophers as Thoreau, Muir, Leopold, and Olson, the following six aspects of the wilderness experience are examined: humility and a sense of humans' true place in the natural world; oneness with nature; primitiveness and a sense of the past; timelessness and the natural rhythms of life; solitude and privacy; and care for the land, which leads to conservation priorities. The Experience Sampling Method was used to study the extent to which these six aspects were part of the subjective experience of 62 canoeists in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. Subjects carried beepers that gave random signals twice daily, at which times respondents completed questionnaires about their thoughts, feelings, and experiences of the moment. The results were used to develop six composite scales that were reliable measures of the six aspects of the wilderness experience. However, the validity of these measures, as well as of the six dimensions themselves, requires further testing. Contains 32 references. (SV)

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Providing an Authentic Wilderness Experience? Thinking Beyond the Wilderness Act of 1964

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Six facets of a wilderness experience are suggested (oneness, humility, primitiveness, timelessness, solitude, and care) based on the writings of wilderness philosophers such as Henry David Thoreau and John Muir. In structuring our lessons in wilderness, we could do well to broaden our notion of wilderness beyond the Wilderness Act.

Keywords: *Wilderness experience, experience sampling method, oneness, humility, primitiveness, timelessness, care*

Introduction

It is tempting for educators taking students into the outdoors to structure a component of their curricula based on the policies of the land owner. For instance, visiting a developed ski resort inspires lessons on skiing, resort management, training and competition and other activities condoned and encourage by the land manager. Similarly, visits to Forest Service lands might suggest discussion of multiple-use forestry, sustainability, forest ecosystems and such. But are the policies enshrined in the Wilderness Act of 1964 sufficient to capture the essence, fullness, and wonder of the received idea of wilderness? The Wilderness Act of 1964 raises to prominence the goals of providing "outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation."

Is this enough? Are we capturing the qualities of a wilderness experience that separate it from other outdoor recreation activities? An argument can be made that not orienting outdoor programs in wilderness to those unique qualities is a misappropriation of wilderness, just as it would be inappropriate to in most cases to teach gymnastics in a cathedral. The question remains, however, as to what it is that differentiates "authentic" wilderness experiences from other uses of the wilderness environment. As Sigurd Olson (1966) suggests:

> One of the great challenges confronting those who believe in the preservation of wilderness is to build a broader base of values than physical recreation, a base of sufficient depth and solidity to counter the charge that it exists for only a privileged and hardy few. (p. 215)

Indeed, it is one of the theses of this paper that such a solid ethic of wilderness had already existed, and that our investigations of the wilderness experience should expand to include it.

The Wilderness Act of 1964 (PL 88-577) has provided a stable and statutory basis upon which to manage and protect certain wildlands of the United States. The language of the Act and the individuals involved in the writing of the Act are part of what could be called a wilderness literary tradition. Each generation of these writers, conservation and preservation activists, and philosophers builds upon the work of those who went before it. The ideas and actions of men like Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, and Aldo Leopold still inspire the writers and

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activists of today. From these giants of American environmental literature comes a common thread of wilderness thought, a history and a philosophy that tries to capture the importance of wilderness and being in wilderness to the modern person.

Experiencing wilderness is more than "recreating." While the Wilderness Act of 1964 focused primarily on the types of recreation experiences that should be provided for by management, there is indication of deeper concerns than the provision of opportunities for hiking, camping, fishing and so on. Two main criteria distinguish areas defined as wilderness under the 1964 Act: degree of naturalness and the potential for solitude (Hendee, Stankey and Lucas, 1990). However, the so-called Eastern Wilderness Act of 1975 (PL 93-622) allows that areas of previous human activity could still be classified as wilderness. This undermines any arguments of strict purity and acknowledges that the criterion of naturalness is largely one of perception and interpretation. Rather, the Act seems to encourage the idea that wilderness be seen as an opportunity to experience lands in which natural processes are allowed to operate as freely as possible. This approach emphasizes the importance of wilderness as an intuitive, direct, and free way of knowing nature. The Eastern Wilderness Act is also the first time that 'inspiration', or reflection, is mentioned as a specific value of wilderness.

The six aspects of wilderness that follow are an attempt to group and categorize some of the disparate ideas of wilderness. They are primarily inspired by the works of Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Sigurd Olson, and other wilderness writers. Any categorization attempt is necessarily artificial if, as is the case here, the categories are not previously accepted. These six aspects do summarize aspects of the wilderness idea common to many writings about wilderness. The six aspects are not definitive, but rather serve to highlight ideas of wilderness that have not received as much explicit attention as they might. (It would be possible to develop other categories such as savagery or harmony, but these were folded into the six aspects—in this case into primtiveness and oneness, respectively.) The following discussion expounds and demonstrates these six aspects of the idea of wilderness: humility, oneness, primitiveness, timelessness, solitude, and care.

HUMILITY

> I am lost-absorbed-captivated with the divine and unfathomable loveliness and grandeur of Nature.
>
> (Muir, quoted in Fox, 1980, p. 7)

> As Howard Zahniser put it, man's deepest need for wilderness is as an aid in "forsaking human arrogance and courting humility in a respect for the community and with regard for the environment."
>
> (Nash, 1982, p. 256)

The beauty of the wilderness experience is one of the simple attractions that draws us to the woods and open spaces. Wilderness amazes us with its many forms and colors, its myriad shapes and tones. But it is more than just pretty; the range and abundance of beauty is almost overwhelming. There is something humbling about all this natural beauty and surprise. Feelings of insignificance and lack of superiority are natural, given the lack of control visitors have over the wilderness environment. Some might feel intimidated or afraid by the sheer scope of wilderness and the lack of human-made conveniences. It is a powerful message of wilderness that within it, humans are but a small part of a much larger community of beings. Wilderness is a great leveler, reminding us, perhaps, of our rightful place within the natural world, and engendering an intellectual humility.

ONENESS

> But let children walk with Nature, let them see the beautiful blendings and communions of death and life, their joyous inseparable unity, as taught in woods and meadow, plains and mountains.
>
> (Muir, 1916, p. 71)

> I wish to speak a word for Nature, for absolute freedom and wildness, as contrasted with a freedom and culture merely civil,—to regard man as

> an inhabitant, or a part and parcel of Nature, rather than a member of society.
>
> (Thoreau, 1862)

Going into wilderness can be an overwhelming experience. Not only are there feelings of insignificance and wonder, but initially it is not unusual to feel an 'otherness' to everything that is out there. But as one begins to feel more comfortable in this seemingly foreign environment, this feeling of separation often diminishes. Feelings of harmony, acceptance and comfort arise. Many writers speak of feeling at-ease and at-home within the wilderness. Muir (1916), for instance, wrote:

> To lovers of the wild, these mountains are not hundreds of miles away. Their spiritual power and the gods of the sky make them near, as a circle of friends. They rise as a portion of the hilled walls of the Hollow. You cannot feel yourself out of doors: plain, sky and mountains ray beauty which you feel. You bathe in these spirit-beams, turning round and round, as if warming at a camp-fire. Presently you lose consciousness of your own separate existence: you blend with the landscape, and become part and parcel of nature. (p. 212)

Wilderness allows a unique opportunity to establish or re-establish close relationships with nature. Perhaps there is an instinctual need to feel at ease and on an equal footing with nature. In contrast to a conquering, macho approach to nature, wilderness fosters harmony and immersion within nature. Rather than being separate from nature, a sense of oneness entails feeling an inter-related part of nature; for example, Westra (1994) wrote about kinship with our fellow beings. Similarly, Ittelson (1978) and Sixsmith (1986) highlighted feelings of belonging and home as part of any environmental experience.

PRIMITIVENESS

> You would like to emulate the pioneer explorers, ... you would like independently to raft down the wild Colorado as John Wesley Powell did a century ago. You would like to go it alone in the mountain wilderness as John Muir did.
>
> (Sax, 1980, p. 15)

> I went to the woods because I wanted to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, ... I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to route all that was not life ...
>
> (Thoreau, 1854, p. 81-82)

Wilderness, because it has been preserved in its natural state, is close to being the way it was when Europeans came to this country. It is our closest reminder of the state of nature from which we have evolved. In wilderness is a chance to revisit nature as our ancestors would have found it. It is a land of challenge, adventure, and for some, hardship. If the moral character of the American people was forged in the experiences of the frontier, then wilderness provides the opportunity to relive it. A simpler way of life awaits those who leave civilization behind, and set forth into the wilderness. Beyond the constraints and responsibilities of society lies the freedom to be wild, perhaps more in tune with the ancient rhythms of life. Americans have valued both the pioneering spirit and the simple lifestyles of their forbears. Wilderness offers the chance to still feel part of the past, as Olson (1938) commented:

> It is surprising how quickly a man sheds the habiliments of civilization and how soon he feels at home in the wilds. Before many days have passed, he feels that the life he has been living was merely an interruption in a long wilderness existence and that now again he is back at the real business of living. And when we think of the comparatively short time that we have been living and working as we do now, when we recall that many of us are hardly a generation removed from the soil, and that a few scant thousand of years ago our ancestors roamed and hunted the vastness of Europe; it is not strange that the smell of wood smoke and the lure of the primitive is with us yet. (p. 51)

TIMELESSNESS

> My wilderness world has to do with the calling of loons, northern lights and the great silences of a land lying north and northwest of Lake Superior. It is concerned with the simple joys, timelessness, and perspective found in a way of life close to the past.
>
> (Olson, 1972, p. xvii)

> As I gazed every color seemed to deepen and glow as if the progress of the fresh sun-work were visible from hour to hour ... A free man revels in a scene like this and time goes by unmeasured.
>
> (Muir, 1901, p. 228)

Wilderness provides the opportunity to leave behind the frantic pace of modern life, and to experience a far less controlled and perhaps unmeasured pace. Some may find a natural affinity with the ancient rhythms of life, the cycles of the seasons, and the day/night patterns of light, temperature, and activity. Indeed, some may find the stillness and time to stop and contemplate or reflect, an activity otherwise not easily fitted into their lives. Within the stillness of wilderness can be found the opportunity, and the time, to contemplate and reflect. Within wilderness, the demands for action may come more naturally from the organic rhythms of nature. Olson, for example, was convinced that given sufficient time, all visitors to wilderness can experience timelessness, and that as they

> accept the time clock of wilderness, their lives become entirely different. It is one of the great compensations of primitive experience, and when one finally reaches the point where days are governed by daylight and dark, rather than schedules, where one eats if hungry and sleeps when tired, and becomes completely immersed in the ancient rhythms, then one begins to live (1976, p. 28).

Tinsley and Tinsley (1986) also suggested that leisure experiences are to some extent characterized by a decreased awareness of the passage of time.

SOLITUDE

> My runes have come from wilderness, for in its solitude, silence and freedom, I can see more clearly those values and influences that over the long centuries has molded us as a race.
>
> (Olson, 1963, p. 3)

> Only by going alone in silence without baggage, can one truly get into the heart of wilderness.
>
> (Muir, 1954, p. 314)

The association of the concept of wilderness with the notion of solitude is particularly noticeable in the writers of this century. Bob Marshall, who helped to draft the Forest Service roadless area regulations that predated federal legislation, saw wilderness as a sanctuary of solitude and silence. Oelschlaeger (1991) believed that through a life of solitude at Walden Pond, Thoreau achieved a special experience of unity with nature. And Olson (1976) felt that wilderness could only be experienced fully when the contrast of solitude could truly be felt. He wrote that, "silence is one of the most important parts of a wilderness experience: without it the land was nothing more than rocks, trees and water" (p. 41).

The opportunity for solitude is a relatively well accepted component of the idea of wilderness. It is specifically enshrined in the Wilderness Act of 1964, and has received significant research attention. According to Hammitt (1982, p. 482), "Privacy, in its many forms, and freedom of choice are what the wilderness user may really be seeking when referring to solitude." Hammitt and Madden (1989) found that "wilderness solitude is much more complex a psychological concept than being alone or even being alone with others. Wilderness privacy and the many realms of freedom of choice that humans seek in remote natural environments provide a better concept of wilderness solitude than 'being alone'" (p. 299). Hammitt and Madden (1989), in their field test efforts to measure privacy, and thereby solitude in wilderness, found "tranquillity and peacefulness of the remote environment and an environment free of human generated noises to be the two most important privacy items" (p. 296).

CARE

> Without love of the land, conservation lacks meaning or purpose.
>
> (Olson, 1976, p. 125)

Perhaps the greatest impact any wilderness experience can provide is a questioning, extension, or alteration of an ethical stance. The wilderness visit can induce profound changes in people's relationship to nature, and in their value system. Karen Warren (1990), a central figure in the development of ecofeminist

thought, wrote of a lived experience that she had in wild country:

> I closed my eyes and began to feel the rock with my hands.... At that moment I was bathed in serenity.... I felt an overwhelming sense of gratitude for what (the rock) offered me—a chance to know myself and the rock differently...to come to know a sense of being in relationship with the natural environment. It felt as if the rock and I were silent conversational partners in a long-standing friendship. I realized then that I had come to care about this cliff which was so different from me.... I felt myself caring for this rock. (pp. 134-135)

Many of the great wilderness writers saw the logical extension of their admiration and enjoyment of wild places to be an ethical stance that prioritized the preservation of wild nature. Indeed, some called for active stances that take responsibility for the welfare of nature. This may have developed from an onus of care or duty. Leopold, for example, wrote of the development of an ecological conscience to guide actions in following the dictates of a land ethic. Out of an intimate relationship with the wilderness environment can develop an actively caring response to nature. As Pigram (1993) wrote, "focusing on the human experiential opportunities inherent in wilderness should enhance respect for the environments which make this experiential diversity and complexity possible" (p. 418).

METHODOLOGY

This study considers applicability of these six aspects of the wilderness experience using the Experience Sampling Method, a relatively new methodology utilized by leisure researchers (Samdahl, 1992, Unger & Kernan, 1983, Graef, Csikszentmihalyi, & Gianinno, 1983). The Experience Sampling Method (ESM) was developed to investigate moment-by-moment experiences of persons in normal settings (Csikszentmihalyi, Larson & Prescott, 1977, Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). It consists of asking individuals to carry electronic beepers that signal pre-programmed random points of time at which subjects report or rate their immediate experiences by filling out a brief questionnaire. The general purpose is to "study the subjective experience of persons interacting with natural environments" (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1987). Unlike post-hoc questionnaires and reflective journal entries, the answering of the ESM form is designed not to become an experience in itself. By using random scheduling, the participant has less of an opportunity to anticipate and prepare for the self-report. Little cognitive effort or verbal skill is required to adequately tap and report the immediate conscious experience. The ESM is, therefore, ideally suited to the verbal report of states (feelings, opinions, and events) without the accuracy difficulties typically associated with such self-report (Borrie, 1995; Borrie & Roggenbuck, 1995).

The study entailed sampling at Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge during the months of October and November, 1994. Canoe trails through the Okefenokee wilderness may be traveled by campers holding permits for trips lasting two to five days. Respondents carried a packet of research materials that was sufficiently waterproof that the packet could sit in the bottom of the canoe easily accessible and the beeper easily heard. Each packet contained a sufficient number of 8 1/2 x 11 inch questionnaires printed on waterproof paper and folded over, two pencils, a plastic backing board on which to write, and the beeper device inside its own plastic bag. The entire package was small in size (6 x 10 inches), brightly colored and individually numbered for identification. The beepers were pre-programmed to sound randomly once in the morning (between 8.00 am and 12.30 pm) and once in the afternoon or early evening (between 12.30 pm and 6.30 pm). Thus, an average group on a three day trip would be beeped five times, since many groups finished their trip around lunch time on the third day. As an initial investigation of the use of experience sampling methods in wilderness this represented a less frequent sampling of experiences than is typically used (8-10 beeps per day are common for urban settings), but seemed more reasonable and less intrusive for the wilderness environment.

Upon hearing the beep, respondents were instructed to turn off the alarm, pull over to a stable location and complete a questionnaire asking them about their thoughts, feelings and experiences at the time the beeper sounded. The survey form took between two and five minutes to complete and aimed to be a 'snap shot' of the moment in time just before the beeper went off. Participants found the task interesting and rewarding and were willing to share their experiences in this way.

RESULTS

On each of 24 sample days (seven weekend days, 16 weekdays), canoeists entering the Okefenokee Wilderness were approach-ed to assist in the study. The main priority was to contact overnight paddlers, but the opportunity to talk with day visitors was also possible. A total of 56 groups were approached, and all but one agreed to participate in the study. (An estimated 80 over-night groups entered Okefenokee Wilderness on these sample days.) After this period of sampling, a small group of visitors were recruited for the study through the mail. These subjects were sent materials (preprogrammed beeper, questionnaires, return envelope) along with their wilderness permit. An additional seven respondents were gained in this manner. (Several groups approached through the mail canceled their trips, misplaced the packet, or refused to participate.) The breakdown of sample days and respondents is shown in Table 1.

Of the 62 respondents who agreed to carry the packet of beeper and questionnaires, all completed at least one questionnaire. Visitors can have trips lasting from part of a day to four and a half days, and were beeped twice daily. Thus, Table 2 shows the breakdown of respondents by the number of questionnaires completed during their visit to Okefenokee Wilderness. As a result, a database of 221 completed questionnaires was collected, from a total of 62 visitor groups.

The six constructs of oneness, humility, primitiveness, timelessness, solitude, and care are an attempt to comprehensively describe the wilderness experience and broaden our investigations of wilderness. In this section we describe and review the reliabilities of the mostly new items, and the scales developed to measure these wilderness constructs.

These items, and the constructs they represent, were developed through discussion with professional colleagues, reflection of the work of wilderness writers, and attempts to capture the fullness of the wilderness experience. Some 100 possible items were drawn together and then distilled down into apparent categories. In some cases, categories were merged; for example, primitiveness includes our original notions of ancestral heritage (particularly of the pioneers), simplicity of life, and savagery. The wording of some items was changed, other items were combined, and other items were discarded entirely. In addition, some items were found to be unsuccessful in a pre-test at Juniper Prairie Wilderness in Florida and were dropped from consideration.

The results of this scale development are shown in Table 3, which list means and standard

TABLE 1

Sampling days and respondent numbers at Okefenokee Wilderness

		Number of visitors		
	Sample days	Overnight visitors	Day visitors	Total visitors
Weekend day	7	13	9	22
Weekday	16	27	6	33
Mail	6	7	-	7
Total	30	47	15	62

TABLE 2

Number of questionnaires completed by visitors

# questionnaires completed / respondent	# of visitors	# questionnaires
9	1	9
only 6	5	30
only 5	11	55
only 4	16	64
only 3	13	39
only 2	8	16
only 1	8	8
Total	62	221

deviations observed (on a 0-9 scale, 0 being low) across all questionnaires. For each scale, items means were similar, with standard deviations around 2.5, suggesting adequate variation of response (e.g., the three oneness items had means between 4.7 and 6.1, which might be compared to the means for the three solitude items of between 5.2 and 6.9). Inter-item correlations were high for each scale, indicating a common underlying construct being tapped by these items. For example, the inter-item correlations for the five primitiveness items ranged between .31 and .63, indicating neither perfect duplication between the items nor a complete lack of co-variation. Cronbach's alpha was used as a measure of the reliability of the items combined into a composite scale, such as oneness. It is a statistic assessing the consistency of the items performance in a scale. Cronbach's alpha measures both homogeneity and internal consistency among the items. Satisfactory levels of alpha were shown for each of the scales of the wilderness experience. Another indication of the goodness of each scale was shown by the decrease in reported alphas should any of the items be removed from an individual scale. Also shown in Table 3 is the fall in variance if any of the items were dropped from the scale (that is, adding items to the scales should increase total scale variance up to the point where the increase in variance does not justify the extra burden upon respondent and analysis).

We can conclude, therefore, that the six composite scales were reliable measures of the six aspects of a wilderness experience, thus providing us with evidence of applicability of the conceptualization of s.. aspects. It is, however, recommended that the validity of these measures, as well as of the six dimensions themselves, should be further examined. This might be achieved through the further use of quantitative analysis (see Borrie, 1995), or through the use of qualitative methods. The Experience Sampling Method allows the opportunity to examine the dynamics of the wilderness experience. For example, the impact of instructor guidance, particular activities, or special locations can be examined since the research subject is responding at a known time and place. The examination of the intellectual traditions of wilderness should also continue, as we search for answers as to what our relationship with wild nature should be.

DISCUSSION

By returning to the writings of wilderness philosophers such as Henry David Thoreau, John Muir and Sigurd Olson, this project has highlighted aspects of the idea of wilderness not fully encapsulated by the Wilderness Act. The six aspects that have been operationalized in this study can provide further guidance to educators working within the National Wilderness Preservation System. While wilderness programs

TABLE 3

Reliability analysis of six scales of the wilderness experience

Oneness Alpha = 0.83, Variance = 41.3	**Mean**	**SD**	**Inter-item correlation**			
I feel a part of wild nature	4.7	2.6				
I was feeling a special closeness with nature	6.1	2.5	.59			
I was feeling totally immersed in nature	5.6	2.4	.54	.73		
	Item-total correlation		**Variance if deleted**		**Alpha if deleted**	
I feel a part of wild nature	.60		20.3		.84	
I was feeling a special closeness with nature	.75		19.2		.70	
I was feeling totally immersed in nature	.71		20.2		.74	
Humility Alpha = 0.77, Variance = 44.3	**Mean**	**SD**	**Inter-item correlation**			
I was in awe of nature's creation	5.9	2.5				
I felt humbled by all of nature around me	5.2	2.7	.59			
I was feeling insignificant in the glory of nature	4.0	2.7	.54	.73		
	Item-total correlation		**Variance if deleted**		**Alpha if deleted**	
I was in awe of nature's creation	.53		24.4		.75	
I felt humbled by all of nature around me	.57		21.9		.56	
I was feeling insignificant in the glory of nature	.70		19.6		.70	
Primitiveness Alpha = 0.82, Variance = 96.2	**Mean**	**SD**	**Inter-item correlation**			
I felt like I was living like a pioneer	2.2	2.2				
I felt the simplicity of life on this trip	4.5	2.6	.31			
I felt that life is simple	3.3	2.7	.44	.63		
I felt connected with times lone ago	3.5	2.8	.50	.45	.60	
I was feeling the heartbeat of the earth	3.5	2.8	.41	.47	.45	.60
	Item-total correlation		**Variance if deleted**		**Alpha if deleted**	
I felt like I was living like a pioneer	.51		71.7		.81	
I felt the simplicity of life on this trip	.60		65.8		.78	
I felt that life is simple	.66		62.4		.77	
I felt connected with times lone ago	.67		60.5		.76	
I was feeling the heartbeat of the earth	.61		61.6		.78	
Timelessness Alpha = 0.72, Variance = 26.1	**Mean**	**SD**	**Inter-item correlation**			
I care what time it is	1.3	2.0				
I was worrying about the time	1.1	2.1	.76			
I care what time it is when I eat	1.5	2.2	.28	.37		

TABLE 3

Reliability analysis of six scales of the wilderness experience (Continued)

(Timelessness, cont.)	Item-total correlation	Variance if deleted	Alpha if deleted
I care what time it is	.62	13.1	.53
I was worrying about the time	.68	11.6	.44
I care what time it is when I eat	.34	15.1	.86
Solitude Alpha = 0.74, Variance = 42.8	Mean SD	Inter-item correlation	
The environment seems free of human-made noises	6.9 2.2		
I feel the tranquillity and peacefulness of this place	5.3 2.8	.53	
I felt the silence of the environment	5.2 2.9	.41 .63	
	Item-total correlation	**Variance if deleted**	**Alpha if deleted**
The environment seems free of human-made noises	.52	26.5	.77
I feel the tranquillity and peacefulness of this place	.70	18.2	.56
I felt the silence of the environment	.61	19.1	.68
Care Alpha = 0.67, Variance = 42.8	**Mean SD**	**Inter-item correlation**	
I feel I want to care for this place	7.3 2.3		
I want to behave properly towards this place	8.0 1.8	.52	
	Item-total correlation	**Variance if deleted**	
I feel I want to care for this place	.52	3.2	
I want to behave properly towards this place	.52	5.3	

can be used for a variety of personal growth-related outcomes (Hendee & Brown, 1988), it is the unique influences of wilderness that can distinguish it from classrooms, therapeutic settings, and other alternative locations. Given the uniqueness of these influences, it would be somewhat utilitarian not to focus some of our attention to the very inspirations of wilderness.

It is tempting as an outdoor educator to focus on the metaphor rather than the lessons that it can teach. Therefore, we should go beyond simply appreciating and using the wilderness environment to highlighting the profound insights that are intrinsic to the wilderness experience. For example, while we must ensure safety in our activities, we should consider shifting our students' attention away from the activity itself, such as learning technical rock climbing skills, onto the feelings of harmony, humility, and relationship with the natural environment. While many outdoor activities can be taught in gymnasiums and sporting facilities, it is the wilderness environment that is not so easily replicated. Many of the lessons of wilderness, such as timelessness, primitiveness, and solitude are more wilderness-dependent than are the activities themselves. We should take care not to sacrifice the unique values of wilderness for less wilderness-dependent outcomes.

The six aspects of the wilderness experience suggested and tested in this study can serve not only as a structure for lessons in the wilderness, but also as a reminder or balance to outdoor educators. The challenge remains as to how to truly integrate objectives such as these into an outdoor program without these philosophies or

outcomes becoming supplementalist or secondary to more pressing or adrenaline-driven concerns. Structure, time, and guidance should be given to the interactions with the wilderness environment itself and the unique opportunities it provides. While many will wish the wilderness to be the teacher, outdoor educators must provide equal opportunity for, and reinforcement of, the lessons it can teach. Simply assuming these outcomes will automatically occur is not doing justice to the motivation for setting aside wilderness.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this discussion, various aspects of the wilderness experience have been identified from the writings of influential wilderness philosophers and scholars. The concepts of oneness, humility, primitiveness, timelessness, solitude, and care have been highlighted. While these concepts are not all encompassing of the wilderness idea, and not all are to be directly found within wilderness legislation, they clearly suggest that the wilderness experience is more than a simple recreation visit. This is not to say that all wilderness recreationists will seek or experience these feelings. Rather, the six constructs discussed above provide insight into the meaning and value of wilderness—they represent some of the beliefs that are influential in preserving and protecting wilderness areas.

In structuring our lessons in wilderness, we are beholden to make the most of the opportunities that wilderness provides. One way is to expand our notion of wilderness, and the values it espouses beyond (but including) the policies of the 1964 Wilderness Act. In doing so, we can actively engage our learners in authentic wilderness experiences.

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